IN A TIGHT FIX.

Jasper Keen and myself were chums during the year we were together at Oxford, and our friendship continued after he had gone down through the two years I remained. He was my senior, three or four years older than myself, and as is generally the case in strong friendships, my opposite in many respects. I was a reading man; Keen was more noted for the strength of his arm on the river, and as a desperate "forward" in the footer field. My temper was always of the mildest; Keen would give vent to paroxysms of anger, and weeks of smothered, revengeful passion. He was a tall, magnificently built fellow, and the men often called us "the long and the short of it," so great was the contrast between us.

I do not say there was nothing intellectual about Jasper Keen. On the contrary, he was a genius; only, like most of his species, he worked by fits and starts. When he did work, however, it was to some purpose, as the examiners knew. And with all his great strength and passion for sport he had a very marked temperament which showed itself in his love of sculpture and modelling. His rooms were a curiosity. Very few books—he always sold them the instant he had finished reading them—prize oars and "pots" in profusion and a collection of clay busts, modelled by himself. There was a row of college Dons on his mantle shelf, clever caricatures, his intimate friends—and his enemies. If he liked a man he made an excellent little bust of him; one the contrary, one who incurred his hatred was modelled in some eccentric or repulsive manner, but still with strict regard to a correct likeness, so that it was impossible to mistake the man.

When Jasper Keen left the 'varsity he set up a studio in London. He was a man of fairly large private means, and did not care about earning money. He devoted himself still to sport during his intervals when he was not exercising his hobby, and lived a generally easy and comfortable life.

In due time I also went to live in town and plunged into the vortex of literary work, to which I had determined to devote my life. I constantly saw Keen, and our friendship was as great as ever, until——

Yes, "until"—you guess what I mean. There was a woman in it, as there is always, and she stepped in between us. Jasper Keen loved her madly, jealously. Over and over again he was repulsed, for Ivey Stirling never cared for him. He frightened her with the intensity of his devotion. One day he said to her:

"The truth is, you care for another man."

"And what if I do?" said Ivey, boldly.

"What if you do? Why this. If I find the man, even if he were my greatest friend, I'd kill him rather than he should win you."

He was Keen's greatest friend. The man who was accepted by Ivey Stirling was myself, and in spite of all, I trust she will be my wife before the year is out.

I may well say "in spite of all." When Keen heard of it he was furious. I told him myself. I thought it best that he should hear the news first from the lips of his friend, and I hoped from the bottom of my heart that our friendship would not be destroyed. So I went round to his studio and broke the news to him.

He stood for some moments with his whole frame quivering, his nostrils dilated and his eyes starting forward like some wild beast held in restraint by a chain. Then he turned to a pedestal on which stood a bust of myself, fashioned by him in the old Oxford days, and dashed it to the ground. The fragments of clay went rattling over the studio.

"Leonard Fendron," he yelled, "as I have broken your bust so will I break you. You false, traitorous hound, you think you have stolen from me the one object I have to live for. But not yet—do you hear? I could crush you as you stand—I could break every bone in your body with this hand of mine. But that would be too poor a revenge. I will wait—I will make you suffer such agony as you have given me. Go, I say, go, and may the worst of all curses light upon you—the curse of a friend that you have wronged."

It was useless to explain; so I went. Ivey was much disturbed when I told her about this interview; but to tell the truth, I thought little of it myself. I had seen Keen in the paroxysm of rage before, and I hoped that in time he would see things sensibly for the sake of old fellowship.

For a year I never saw the man. His studio was shut up and report said that he had gone abroad. Then I suddenly met him face to face in Fleet street. I was going to pass him by at first, but he stopped me and shook hands.

"How d'ye do, Fendron?" he said. "Last time I saw you I was in a fit temper. But that's all over now, and I can afford to let the past be buried in the past—if you can, too."

"Certainly," I replied; "I'm only too delighted to hear our friendship still exists."

"That's right," he said. "And now come and have some lunch with me. There's a restaurant handy, where we can talk."

So I went with him. He was most friendly and chatty. He told me he had been abroad, but that the last five months had been spent in England.

"I've been living like a hermit," he said. "The fact is, I'm engaged on a masterpiece of work. It will beat anything I've ever done. Oh, it's a grand thing, I can tell you. I fitted up a studio in the country some months ago, and I've hardly stirred out of it since—simply worked and seen no one. But I've had an end in view, as you shall see for yourself. Now, I want you to pay me a visit, and you shall be the first to see my masterpiece. Will you come?"

"Certainly," I said; "what day will suit you?"

"Let me see—it's the 9th to-day. I want a clear fortnight on the work before I finish. Can you come on Friday, the 24th, and stay till Monday? I can easily put you up."

"With pleasure. That will suit me, capitally. Only you haven't told me where to come to yet."

"I hardly think you'd find it if I did," he answered thoughtfully; "it's not very far from town, but it's a bit awkward to get at for a stranger. So suppose you meet me at Euston at half-past eight on that Friday evening, and I'll take you down. It's rather late, but you shall have a good supper as soon as you get there, I promise you."

To this arrangement, I accordingly agreed, and on the 24th I met Keen at Euston. Telling me that he had purchased my ticket he took me to a local train. We got out at Sudbury, the station near Wembley Park.

"There's some little distance to walk," he said. "So we had better step it out briskly."

It must have been a tramp of over two miles that finally brought us to a large house, standing quite alone a little way off the road, somewhere in the direction of Edgeware. Although not many miles from London the country about here is very lonely and there was not a house near. It was about 10 o'clock and quite dark when Keen opened the door with a latch-key.

"Welcome!" he cried. 'You must be tired and hungry. We'll have supper at once, it's all ready."

And without further ado he led the way into a good-sized room, lit by a lamp, and revealed a table spread with cold viands.

There was a change in his tone of voice that made me feel rather uneasy as he went on:

"We're all to ourselves, Fendron. I've let the servants out for the evening. But everything's ready for us, so sit down and begin. We must be our own butlers."

It was an excitable meal. The whole of the time Keen talked and laughed and joked. He ran on about old times and our college days; he laughed long and boisterously—once I expostulated with him for his noise.

"What does it matter?" he shouted. "There's not a soul near. That's the beauty of the country. You might yell yourself hoarse in this shanty of mine and no one would hear you."

He even touched upon my engagement. Leaning across the table, he insisted upon grasping my hand.

"I've never congratulated you yet, old chap, you know. Last time we were on this subject I was in a huff. But it's all right now. May you be happy—ha! ha! ha!—as happy as you deserve!"

Supper over he took up the lamp.

"Come," he said, "we'll adjourn to the studio and smoke there. I've got to show you my great work. It will surprise you. Come along."

He led the way to the very top of the house, and we entered a large room which he had turned into a studio. Lumps of clay, pieces of stones, tools and half-finished works were lying about in artistic confusion. On a small table was a box of cigars, several decanters of wine and spirits, siphons and tumblers. In one corner of the room was a large bath, filled with a white powder, while a small shovel and a couple of pails of water stood by it. In the center of the room was a very large, hollow wooden pedestal, shaped like a cylinder, and quite as high as my shoulders, such as is used sometimes for standing heavy busts upon. The top, however, had been removed from this cylinder and there was nothing on it. The room was evidently only lighted by a skylight, and a thick curtain hung over the door, and stretched across what was apparently a recess at the farther end of the apartment, was another curtain, hanging in black folds.

Keen gave me a cigar and sat me down in a chair.

"Well, what do you think of my work-shop?" he asked.

"I've hardly had time to look round, yet," I replied. "What's that huge pedestal for?"

"You'll see later on," he said.

Again that ominous change in his voice.

"And what's in that bath?"

"Oh! plaster of paris," he answered, with a laugh; "but now watch! I'm going to draw the curtain!"

First lighting a couple of more lamps, he drew the curtain aside with a sudden jerk. The result was electrical. There, standing on a small raised platform, life-size and most exquisitely modeled, was a statue of Ivey Stirling, my betrothed. I sprang to my feet and uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"Yes," shouted Keen, "there stands the image of the woman you love—and the woman I loved once. She whose image was so graven upon my heart that I was able to mold this statue as you see it; to mold it for you, Leonard Fendron, who have won the prize. Did I not tell you it was a masterpiece."

"You did. And so it is!" I replied, with an indescribable feeling of terror creeping over me. My companion rushed to the table and filled two glasses. One of them he thrust into my hand.

"A health!" he cried. "Drain it to the dregs. A health to the fair Ivey, your betrothed! Drink it, Fendron!"

"A health to the fair Ivey—my future wife," I said mechanically, drinking the liquor and gazing at the statue.

"Your future wife!" echoed Keen, with a terrible voice. "Never!" I turned and gazed at him. He was foaming with madness and rage. At the same moment my head grew dizzy and the room seemed twirling around. I made a wild rush for the door, but fell in a dead faint before I could reach it.

When I came to my senses again there was an awful feeling of cramp all over me. My whole body, with my legs and arms, seemed to be held in a vice that was pressing me at every point. I opened my eyes. The first thing that met my eyes was the statue of Ivey placed opposite me. I was in an upright position, but I could not move. I looked downwards, but not even then did I realize the horrible truth. I was up to my shoulders in the hoHow pedestal.

"Halloa! you've come to, have you?" said a mocking voice, and Jasper Keen stood in front of me, the grin of a lunatic on his face.

"For God's sake what have you done?" I asked.

"I'll very soon tell you," he replied with a sneer; "I've made a statue of you. Listen. You are up to your shoulders in plaster of paris. Whilst you were insensible from the effects of that drugged wine you drank I placed you in the pedestal, mixed that bathful of plaster and water and poured it in with you. It took me some time to do, and it's now 4 o'clock in the morning. By this time it's thoroughly set and you cannot move hand nor foot."

The terrible situation was dawning upon my mind. My tormentor went on:

"Did you think, Leonard Fendron, that I had forgotten? Did you expect to get a forgiveness from Jasper Keen? You should have known me better, and not walked so foolishly into the snare that I set for you. I told you I would have revenge. I have waited and schemed a long time, but now the hour of my vengeance has come. Here, before the image of the woman you love, you shall die, Leonard Fendron—die a slow and awful death. I shall leave you here fixed, immovable—a living statue. Don't think to escape, for I have planned it well. My servants were dismissed two days ago; I told them I was going to leave the house for some months. You can shriek and howl as much as you please, but no one will hear you. I've tested that carefully. In short, unless an angel from heaven comes to set you free, here you'll stay till you starve to death in cramp and agony."

"Have mercy—" I began, but he stopped me.

"Mercy? As soon expect to find it at satan's hands! Here, I'll put this table with the liquor on it close to you. It will be more tantalizing. And now I must be off. I've planned my escape well. Good-by, Leonard Fendron. I wish you joy with your bride of clay."

And the madman, for so he was, I am assured, at that moment struck me a heavy blow in the face, turned on his heel, slammed the door, and I heard his footsteps disappear down the stairs. I was alone and helpless.

I cannot describe the torture as the long hours went by and the light of the lamps slowly faded as the day began to dawn. The cramp in my body and limbs was awful, my throat was parched, and my brain seemed to be on fire. I yelled and screamed at the top of my voice listening in anguish for an answering voice, but answers came there none. The villain had prepared his plot too well! I tried to lurch forward and hurl myself to the floor. In vain! The pedestal was fixed! And there, a few feet in front if me, stood the statue of Ivey, so lifelike and beautiful that it seemed at times to my frenzied brain brin that she was smiling and speaking to me.

Then came a time when all was dark. I had fainted. Too soon I returned to the fearful reality, and redoubled my screams. It was fruitless. I was in a mental and bodily anguish that was too awful for words. How the hours passed I knew not. It seemed years that I had been fixed there. I seemed never to have lived at all except in a world of terror.

My God! I cannot describe the anguish!

Suddenly there came a sound. Yes I was not mistaken. A heavy bang on the roof overhead. I listened with straining ears—ah—a footstep!

"For God's sake, help—help!" I cried.

Then there came a tap at the skylight overhead and a voice spoke:

"Excuse me, but may I come in?"

"Come in!" I shrieked; "in heaven's name yes, come in!"

"You seem in a mighty hurry," replied the voice. "Suppose you open the sky-light for me."

"I can't," I answered; "smash it—do what you like—only be quick."

Crash! The glass came spattering down on the floor; a foot came through the window, then another, and in a few seconds the man himself stood before me.

"Well, I'm blowed," he exclaimed; "what on earth does this mean?"

"For God's sake be quick and set me free," I begged. "It's killing me. Give me something to drink first."

I eagerly drained the tumbler of soda water he held to my lips. Then he set to work. He was a businesslike man, and there was some stone chisels and hammers about. In a very few moments he had split the pedestal down, and was hammering and chipping away at the plaster, which, of course, by this time, was quite hard and came off in flakes and lumps. It seemed ages to me, but he afterwards told me it took him a very short time to get me free, though large lumps of plaster stuck to my clothes. I was horribly cramped and could not stir when it was over. He undressed me and gave me a tremendous rubbing, until at length the circulation became partially restored and the agony began to subside, and I was able to talk.

"Well," he exclaimed, "this is the rummiest thing I've ever come across. Goodness only knows what would have happened to you if my parachute hadn't gone wrong."

"Your parachute?"

"Yes—that's how I came here. I'm a professional aeronaut, and I've been making a balloon ascent and a parachute descent at Wembley park every Saturday afternoon for a couple of months past."

"And you landed on the roof?" I exclaimed.

A Christian Science Fable.

New York Times: And it came to pass that a certain company journeyed from the Land of Unrest, until they came to the City of Haste.

And they were for the most part women. And they sat themselves down in the city and viewed the land.

Soon wearying of this diversion they with one accord lifted up their voices and wept at the dullness of existence. And as they all wept, behold a certain woman of their number arose and cried out with a loud voice, saying: "Hearken unto me, sisters and brothers, for verily I have found the truth! Behold, I will lead you into a better land." And as she spoke she raised not her eyes above, but bent them upon her own person.

But the eyes of the multitude were holden that they did not see the gesture.

And they all rose up and followed her. And they called her "Mater," and Ego reigned supreme.

And it further came to pass that one of their number fell sick of a fever, and was nigh unto death.

But she did not lay upon a couch, but rather journeyed with them. And as she lay down at night to rest and could not rise up again, the Mater stood beside her and thus spake: "Know that the creative energy of the universe causes you to rise up. Hold this in thought. Have kindly feelings toward yourself, and remember that the limbs which you fancy are aching are not limbs at all."

And the disciple pondered but remained. For the pain remained also.

And on the second day the company journeyed on. And it fell that on the third day a good Samaritan passed that way. And seeing the sick woman he ministered unto her, and straightway called for a physician.

And the physician brought physic, the use of which had been divulged to him by science from the Creator, and he gave unto her, and she recovered.

And behold as she lay convalescing the Samaritan came unto her and placed a Book in her hands. And her eyes were opened as she read.

"Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so-called."

A SNAKE FIGHT.

The Black Reptile's Victory was Followed by a Feast.

Chambers' Journal: It was in Australia, and in the fall of the year. My friend and I were returning from a tour which had carried us far into the bush, as the forests of gum-trees and scrub are there called. We were walking through a clearing, when the unmistakable rattle of a snake arrested us, and in a few minutes we saw the beginning of a fierce encounter between two deadly enemies—a blacksnake and a rattle. These two branches of the snake family are hereditary and implacable foes, though what was the origin of the feud Darwin saith not. Between them there can be neither fellowship, amity, compromise nor even armed neutrality. War to the death is their unalterable law from generation to generation. The blacksnake is much smaller than the rattle, but he is a terrible, formidable foe, and, as science is superior to mere size and strength, he generally comes out victorious. He seems to "scent the battle (or rather the rattle) from afar," and gives himself no rest until he gains a point of vantage from which he can make a sudden swoop upon the noisy foe. On this occasion we did not see the blacksnake until he leaped on the rattle's throat, nor did we afterwards make out how he had got so near without being seen. That power of silent, stealthy, rapid movement gives the black fellow an immense advantage over the rattle enemy. It is that, indeed, on which his hope of victory mainly depends. Let the blacky by a sudden leap grasp the throat of the unwary rattle, and the chances are he will never let go again "until death them do part;" but if that first chance be lost, and the two meet in fair fight, after fair warning, the fangs of the rattle are pretty sure to gain him the victory.

In this instance no such misfortune was the blacky's. He made his spring and got his grip of the throat, and there he held on, "like grim death." With a fury that was sometimes awful the rattle wriggled and shook, and rolled and writhed. He leaped into the air, twisted and tossed himself about, banged his assailant down on the ground, rolled on and over him, but all in vain. Blacky simply stuck. Nothing could move him, nothing tempt him or compel him to relax his hold for a single moment. To have done so would have been almost certain death to himself; but, through all the rearings, leapings, tossings, writhings and hissings of his victim, on he held with a relentless tenacity that was equal only to his love of his own life and his hate of his foe's.

Thus for more than an hour and a half the life and death game was kept up without a minute's intermission, and without any sign of weakening on either side. Then we preceived that the rattle's strength seemed to be giving way, and all of a sudden he coiled himself up and lay still, as if to die. Whether is was from sheer exhaustion or only a ruse to deceive his enemy, a faint or a feint, we were not sure. We thought it was the former, but blacky evidently thought otherwise. He understood his enemy better than we did, and did not mean to be tricked. Down he lay by the side of the prostrate victim, but with his teeth firmly set in the now torn and crumpled throat.

Then, after a quiet interval, the one-sided truce having come to an end, or the ruse having failed, the rattle rose again and renewed the unequal struggle with the energy of desperation—a supreme struggle for life. Again he reared and rolled and coiled, and darted up and down, forward and backward, carrying his enemy with him in all his contortions, trying by every conceivable twist to get his fangs into the merciless foe; but all in vain. Then we began to see in the poor victim renewed signs of failing strength; but notwithstanding increasing weakness, he struggled for a time continuously, then intermittently, until, more than two hours and a half after the first attack, the poor rattle gave up the contest and lay down to die. This time it was no ruse. The poor fellow was done for, and within ten or fifteen minutes after the mute surrender he yielded up the ghost. But even then blacky still stuck, and it was not until the corpse began to stiffen that he for the first time withdrew the nails which had been driven nearly three hours before into the sure place—the throat of the unhappy rattle.

Then, the tragedy being ended, the comedy began, and a comedy indeed it was, at any rate to the two spectators. On the part of the victor there was no sign of triumph, no dancing around the prostrate enemy; but with all possible staidness and straightforwardness the hero prepared for the celebration of his victory. He began by stretching and straightening out the lifeless body, smoothing out every crease and every wrinkle on its scaly surface, with what intent we could not even guess. He seemed to have assumed the role of an undertaker, and to be preparing the corpse for decent burial, magnanimous toward a brave though defeated foe. Not a twist or wrinkle was left upon the carcass from tip to toe, from nose to outstretched tail. Then, to our greater bewilderment, we saw that he was licking the body from end to end, making straight parallel lines of saliva along its entire length, which, with the rays of the setting sun falling on it, exhibited all its various hues, and made us long for its possession, that we might carry it away with us. But the darky had something better to do than indulge in a benevolent sentiment for our gratification. For ten minutes or more he continued his preparations, until he made four or five streaks of saliva, which shown like satin ribbons, laid horizontally on the dead body from end to end.

Then the blacky rose and shook himself, and, having done so, took up his position at the head of his victim and calmly gazed upon him, with the first gleam of satisfaction in his bright little eye. We were still full of wonder and conjecture as to his purpose, interment of some kind being the only thing we yet thought of. But when we saw him calmly open his mouth to its utmost capacity and take into it the entire head of the defunct rattler; then he gulped and swallowed; then rested; then another gulp and another swallow; and so on until he had tucked into him the whole body, a foot longer than himself; and then, with the tip of the tail still dangling from his mouth, he dragged himself into the scrub, and thence probably into a gully, there to spend a month or more digesting his ponderous meal, and "fighting the battle o'er again" in blissful dreams.

KIPLING'S "CURSE."

The Abuse of the United States Which he Wrote Ten Years Ago.

New York Bookman: In spite of the fact that we are told that these volumes contain "an accurate text" of the "American Notes," some of the harshest strictures on the United States have been deleted. To show that the text is not as first printed we shall quote the following "curse," which he pronounced upon the United States before he had ever set foot upon the continent. He was looking for something to read on the way from Nikko to Yokohama, and in a book shop in Nikko found a collection of the "burglaries" (he insists that they were not publications) of the Seaside Publishing Company. These are his words:

"Then I cursed the Seaside Library and the United States that bred it very copiously, in these terms and others unreported:

"Because you steal the property of a man's head, which is more his peculiar property than his pipe, his horse, or his wife, and because you glory in your theft and have the indecency to praise or criticise the author from whom you steal, and because your ignorance, which is as dense as a pickpocket's ignorance of anything outside his calling, leads you to trifle with his spelling, and because you print the stolen property aforesaid very vilely and uncleanly, you shall be cursed with this curse from Alaska to Florida and back again:

"Your women shall scream like peacocks when they talk and your men neigh like horses when they laugh. You shall call 'round' 'raound' and 'very' 'varry' and 'news' 'noos' till the end of time.

"You shall be governed by the Irishman and the German, the vender of drinks and the keeper of vile dens; that your streets may be filthy in your midst and your sewage arrangements filthier.

"You shall be given over to the cult of tin-pot secret societies and the organizing of 'tuppenny-hapenny' processions, the spouting of nonsense and the perpetration thereof.

"You shall be governed by laws that you cannot enforce and sentiments that you cannot control; that the murderer may walk among you in a vision of delight to young women and the darling of old maids while you are engaged in shooting the wrong man.

"You shall prostitute and pervert the English language till an Englishmen has neither power nor desire to understand you any more.

"You shall be cursed state by state, territory by territory, with a provincialism beyond provincialism of an English country town—you and your governors and what you are pleased to call your literature, your newspapers, and your politics.

"You shall buy your art from France, and considerably soil it in the buying, because you are dishonest.

"Your hearts shall be so blinded that you shall consider each one of the curses foregoing a blessing to you as it comes about, and, finally, I my self will curse you more elaborately later on."

This delicate passage appeared in the Pioneer Mail, volume 16, No. 19, for November 13, 1889.

She'll Report Him.

Detroit Free Press: The postman has a long route in the Piety Hall district, and the lively correspondence carried on from that section makes it necessary for him to call at almost every door. He was handling his forenoon delivery at his best speed the other day when a novel interruption occurred. He had handed a letter to the woman of the house, and was hurrying on his way when she ran excitedly on the sidewalk and hailed him. "Hi, there!" she shouted. "Come back, please. I want to talk with you. That was a very important letter you gave me," as he approached, "and I must answer it at once. Just sit down here on this side porch and wait, won't you? It'll not take me more than fifteen minutes."

"I'd like to accommodate you, madame, but it is impossible. I'm crowded as it is, and can't lose a minute."

"Just you do as I tell you," recalling how she had heard her husband talk on occasions. "I'd like to know what we pay taxes for. I can get through in ten minutes."

"But it would be liable to lose me my job."

"Oh, I'll see to that," with a masculine wave of the hand. "What? Not going to wait? See here, sir, I'll report you to the mayor, that's what I'll do. Don't you think because I'm a woman that I don't know my constitutional rights. I'll do worse than that. I'll report you to the governor," as she kept pace with him, and gesticulated with both hands. "You might just as well be looking for another berth," she shouted in her final appeal, "for I'll write the President this very night. The very idea." Still he hurried along while she returned to regale her neighbor, with an exciting narrative of what she had done and was going to do.

JULIA KNEW HERSELF.

Thus She Found it an Easy Matter to Bring John to the Proposing Point.

Chicago Inter-Ocean: "Oh, Mamie," said the blonde girl to the brunette. "I have got a piece of news. John Davis proposed to Julia Smith last night, and of course she said yes, and they are to be married in September, and——"

"Yes, I've heard it all; everybody in the neighborhood knows all about it," interrupted the brunette. "And what's more, I know exactly how she managed it. Oh, she's a sly one, is Julia."

"Tandem, moonlight, etc., I s'pose," said the blonde girl.

"Nothing of the sort," said the brunette. 'Her scheme was really quite ingenious and original. It was like this: John, you know, is a queer sort of a chap. He is athletic himself, and he despises a woman who hasn't the figure of a washerwoman and the strength of a circus acrobat. He talks about the physical degeneracy of the American woman, rails at corsets and all that sort of thing and swears he'll never marry a girl who hasn't a constitution like a Philippine woman or some other kind of savage. Of course, he doesn't say all this point blank to the girls themselves, but he's always hinting at it, and when he's with the boys he talks right out plain. Of course, Julia hears all this from her brother Sam. She's got a beautiful figure, Julia has, I must admit that. But she doesn't go in for golf, and she isn't devoted to the wheel. She's the other sort—distinctly feminine, you know, and all that sort of thing. She doesn't like short skirts or mannish shirt waists and collars, and sticks to clinging draperies and such things. So, of course, John, though he likes Julia quite a little, falls into the idea that she's a soft, feminine, useless sort of creature, without any strength, and nothing but a society butterfly.

"Well, Julia sizes up the situation and makes up her mind to open John's eyes. Her mother, you know, is a splendid housekeeper, and one of those practical women who believe in girls knowing how to do things about a house. Consequently, Julia knows how to do all sorts of things—wash and iron and cook and all the rest. So one night Julia leads on the unsuspecting John until he is riding his hobby good and strong. Then she gets him to admit that because she does not go into athletics of all kinds he thinks she's a gilded butterfly, or words to that effect. Then she up and offers to bet him that she'll do the family washing the next Monday, and do it in style. He can't back out, and she wagers a theatre party against a box of gloves. Of course, John himself is to be the judge—that's the game.

"Well, John shows up Monday morning, and finds Julia well along with the washing; in fact, she's just ready to hang out the first of the clothes. And maybe she wasn't got up for his benefit! She had on a blue print gown, and looked as neat as a pin. Just think of the possibilities—sleeves rolled up to the elbow over round, white arms; clinging skirts that revealed unsuspected charms over the washboard; dainty attitudes as she stooped over the clothes basket, and stood on tiptoe to reach the clothes line; glimpses of slender ankles, etc. Humph! No wonder he proposed that very night."